

# Residents seek help with flooding in Fairport

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**LAKE COUNTY** - Niles Oinonen of East Street in Fairport Harbor addressed the Lake County Board of Commissioners at its May 5 meeting concerning all the sewer backups occurring in the area.

"We've been getting more sewer water backing up into our basements more often and it's not technically, really, we don't think, due to the flooding," he said. "The flooding is adding to it; we understand that, but there's something wrong when the storm water, or rain water, ends up in the sanitary sewers."

Oinonen said he was talking about two and three feet of sewage flooding in basements. He asked what the county's plan was and noted no one in the village, including council, has received any reports from the testing the county did in the village previously.

He said he knows the county came in and did some work on the system, but since then, different areas are flooding.

Board President Ray Sines asked Randy Rothlisberger, assistant sanitary engineer, to address the projects completed in the village.

"We replaced about 2,000 feet of sanitary sewer line along New Street and Plum

Street and then through the easement over the last three or four years," Rothlisberger said. "We've found a few manholes that we repaired; maybe a dozen or so that were leaking over the last couple years. Right now we're working on a plan to improve the Glyco Lift Station, which basically all Fairport Harbor goes to this Glyco Lift Station and is pumped to our greater Mentor (plant)."

He said February and March had double the average rainfall and all spring the area has had above average amounts of rain. The good thing has been that the county has been able to send cameras into the system with the higher than average water levels to televise the lines. Trying to find storm water leaking into the system is difficult when water levels are low, he explained.

Some leaks have been found recently and they will be fixed.

One problem the county cannot fix is all the storm water entering the sanitary

system from private properties.

"We're finding a lot of clear water coming in through the laterals ... from these private property sources, either from sump pumps, footing drains or just leaking laterals could be the source," Rothlisberger said.

There was a meeting scheduled with Fairport officials for the following week, concerning the private property issues and how to address them.

He said Fairport had pursued getting its residents to fix downspouts so they were no longer connected to sanitary sewer lines. Splash blocks were supplied to property owners.

In at least one case, when a resident needed to dig up his basement, he found the footer drain was connected to the sanitary system.

Tim Hadden of Vine Street in Fairport also spoke on the issue. He first presented copies of his mother's utility bills and the receipt for her second furnace replacement in five years.

He said he realized the county had been working on the problem, but he wished to have the project made a priority.

"I think the flooding affects the entire town; not just the few people that have been meeting with Randy," Hadden said. "It's a massive problem; it's going to take a lot of money to fix it. It's not getting better. ... It seems to be increasing in intensity and frequency."

Rothlisberger said there was a consultant that completed a study of the village and set priorities, so that was how the county was proceeding.

Commissioner Dan Troy said Fairport's system was not in good shape when the county took it over as part of a deal to get additional federal funding to build the Gary L. Kron Wastewater Treatment Plant.

He said the systems still use the same materials as

they did 50 years ago, which is clay pipe and grouting. He asked LCDU if there were any new materials which could be used and would eliminate the possibility of future leaks such as the current system is sustaining.

"There's new technology and new methods coming out every year and we are constantly reviewing those," Rothlisberger said.

He said lining seemed to be working best right now, and the process eliminates the joints. The laterals are still an issue.

The Fairport residents also mentioned there seemed to be more water problems at the cemetery and in the village since Hemisphere Corporation had begun work on the old Diamond Shamrock property.

Troy asked that Tim Miller, director of the Lake County Stormwater Management Department check into those allegations.